

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 12, 2003. Claims 1-27 are presented for examination, of which Claims 1, 5, 10, 14, 19, and 23 are in independent form. The independent claims have been amended to define Applicants' invention more clearly, and the other claims have been amended as to formal matters. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

The Office Action states that the disclosure is objected to because of the informality noted in section 1. In response, the specification has been amended to correct the noted typographical error. Accordingly, withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

The Office Action states that the specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the term "simultaneously" in Claims 9, 18, and 27. Similarly, Claims 9, 18, and 27 have been objected to because the term "simultaneously" does not have sufficient antecedent basis. In response, the term "simultaneously" has been deleted from Claims 9, 18, and 27. Therefore, withdrawal of the objections to the specification and Claims 9, 18, and 27 is respectfully requested.

The Office Action states that Claims 1-27 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,668,640 (Nozawa et al.). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejections and submit that independent Claims 1, 5, 10, 14, 19, and 23, together with the claims dependent therefrom, are not anticipated by Nozawa et al. for at least the following reasons.

An aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 1 is directed to a

communication apparatus that includes a multi-address transmission unit and a determination unit. The multi-address transmission unit is adapted to execute a ring type multi-address transmission in a group of communication apparatuses. The determination unit is adapted to make a determination as to whether a ring type multi-address transmission is specified. When the ring type multi-address transmission is specified, the multi-address transmission unit memory-receives data received by the communication apparatus and transmits the memory-received data to a next station based on a print-out instruction issued according to a manual actuation of an operator.

Support for Claim 1 may be found in, for example, Fig. 7, step S32 of Fig. 5, and step S48 of Fig. 6, and their corresponding descriptions in the specification.¹

One of the notable features of Claim 1 is that the memory-received data is transmitted to the next station based on the issuance of the print-out instruction by a manual actuation of the operator. By virtue of this feature, the operator is able to securely confirm receipt of the data through the ring type multi-address transmission.

Nozawa et al. relates to a facsimile apparatus that receives document data from another facsimile apparatus and stores the received data in an image memory. As understood by Applicants, Nozawa et al. teaches that the received data may be transmitted to another facsimile apparatus without having to print the data and then reading the printed document.

Nothing has been found in Nozawa et al. that is believed to teach or suggest a

¹ The examples provided herein are intended for illustrative purposes. It should be understood that the scope of the claims of this application is not limited to the illustrative examples or any details discussed in connection therewith.

communication apparatus that includes "a multi-address transmission unit, which is adapted to execute a ring type multi-address transmission in a group of communication apparatuses," and "a determination unit, which is adapted to make a determination as to whether a ring type multi-address transmission is specified," wherein, "when the ring type multi-address transmission is specified, said multi-address transmission unit memory-receives data received by said communication apparatus and transmits memory-received data to a next station based on a print-out instruction issued according to a manual actuation of an operator," as recited in Claim 1.

As understood from Fig. 7B of Nozawa et al., data received through a ring type multi-address transmission is transmitted to a next station *irrespective* of whether an operator confirms the data. Therefore, Nozawa et al. fails to provide the beneficial feature of Claim 1 discussed above, in which an operator is able to securely confirm receipt of data received through a ring type multi-address transmission.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 1 is not anticipated by Nozawa et al., and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). Independent Claims 10 and 19 include a feature similar to that discussed above, in which memory-received data is transmitted to a next station based on a print-out instruction issued according to a manual instruction of an operator. Therefore, those claims also are believed to be patentable for at least the above reasons.

An aspect of the present invention set forth in Claim 5 is directed to a communication apparatus designed to perform a ring type multi-address transmission by transferring received data to a next station. The apparatus includes a receiving unit, an

instruction unit, and a transferring unit. The receiving unit is adapted to receive data sent by a multi-address transmission. The instruction unit is adapted to issue an instruction on a transfer of the received data to the next station. The transferring unit is adapted to transfer the received data to the next station based on the instruction by instruction unit. If the instruction by the instruction unit is not issued within a predetermined period of time, the transferring unit forcibly transfers the received data to the next station.

Support for Claim 5 may be found in, for example, Fig. 14, steps S152 to S156 of Fig. 15, and Fig. 16, and their corresponding descriptions in the specification.

One of the notable features of Claim 5 is that data received in a ring type multi-address communication is forcibly transferred to a next station if an instruction to transfer the received data is not issued within a predetermined time period. By virtue of this feature, when an operator is not present for an extended period of time, for example, and thus cannot issue an instruction to transfer the received data, the received data can still be transferred via a ring type multi-address transmission without an indefinitely long interruption.

Nothing has been found in Nozawa et al. that is believed to teach or suggest a communication apparatus that includes "an instruction unit adapted to issue an instruction on a transfer of the received data to the next station," and "a transferring unit adapted to transfer the received data to the next station if the transfer to the next station is selected based on the instruction by said instruction unit," wherein the transferring unit "forcibly transfers the received data to the next station if the instruction by said instruction unit is not issued within a predetermined period of time," as recited in Claim 5.

As discussed above in connection with Claim 1, Nozawa et al. is understood to teach that received data is automatically transferred to a next station, which does not allow time for an operator to confirm receipt of the data. As such, Nozawa et al. is not seen to show or suggest waiting a predetermined period of time before forcibly transferring received data, if an instruction to transfer the received data is not issued.

Accordingly, Applicants submit that Claim 5 is not anticipated by Nozawa et al., and respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b). Independent Claims 14 and 23 include a feature similar to that discussed above, in which a communication apparatus waits a predetermined period of time before forcibly transferring received data to a next station in a ring type multi-address transmission, if an instruction to transfer the received data is not issued. Therefore, those claims also are believed to be patentable for at least the above reasons.

The other claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above, and therefore are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons. Since each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, individual reconsideration of the patentability of each claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.


No petition to extend the time for response to the Office Action is deemed necessary for the present Amendment. If, however, such a petition is required to make this

Amendment timely filed, then this paper should be considered such a petition and the
Commissioner is authorized to charge the requisite petition fee to Deposit Account 06-1205.

CONCLUSION

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,


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